

**OFFICE OF CHILD CARE LICENSING'S
MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
And
THE ANSWERS**

Mission Statement

“To ensure the health, safety and well-being of children in child care centers and child care group homes throughout Arizona by establishing appropriate rules, monitoring for compliance, offering technical assistance and training to caregivers, and providing consumer education.”

By Parents

1. Why should I choose a licensed or certified child care?

Department of Health Services licensed or certified providers are required to be fingerprinted. An extensive background check is done at that time. In addition to the licensing inspections by the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) centers are required to have fire, sanitation and safety inspections. Group homes are required to meet local zoning requirements.

2. Do all persons who care for children in their homes have to be licensed by the state?

No, a person may care for four or fewer children, who are not their own, without being certified. Persons who care for five or more children for compensation must be certified in order to operate legally.

3. How many children may a center care for at one time?

There are several criteria that determine the number of children which may be cared for in a center. The criteria are: (a) square footage for indoor activity area; (b) age of children being care for in each room. The maximum number of children that the center may care for will be printed on the license and each room will have a maximum capacity posted.

4. What happens to my child if my home provider becomes ill or has an accident during the day?

Regulations require that each home provider have an assistant provider who must be familiar with the regulations and policies of the home. The assistant provider must be present when the provider is not home.

5. How will I learn about the center's rules and policies?

The center is required to provide the parents with a written Statement of Services which must include, but is not limited to, the following: services offered, hours, enrollment and disenrollment procedures, charges, fees and payment requirements, admission and release requirements, discipline policy, transportation procedures, field trip requirements, parent responsibilities, a description of activities, statement of liability insurance, medication policy, emergency medical procedures, statement of availability of inspection reports and that they are regulated by the Department of Health Services with the address and phone number of OCCL.

6. Can the center or home provider give medications to my child?

The center or home provider may or may not administer medication depending on their policy. If your provider chooses to administer medication, there are strict guidelines in the rules which must be followed.

7. **What happens if my provider fails to meet some of the regulations?**

When the Department determines the facility is not in compliance, OCCL will cite the facility and offer technical assistance to help them return to compliance. An acceptable Written Documentation of Correction is required. If there is a consistent pattern of non-compliance or areas which endanger the health and safety of children, legal action may be taken against the facility. Legal action may include the following: reduction of services, fines, suspension or revocation of the license. See current enforcement action at www.azdhs.gov

8. **How will I know if my provider is meeting regulations?**

Upon the requests of parents, providers are required to make copies of inspections available. Child Care Rules and Statutes are available for you at www.azdhs.gov

9. **What will my provider do in an emergency if I cannot be reached?**

Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact persons, in addition to themselves. The provider will try to contact the parent first, and if the parent cannot be reached, the persons listed as the emergency contacts will be called. In the event that parents and the persons listed as the emergency contacts cannot be reached, 911 or Child Protective Services will be called.

10. **What are the ratios for Centers? For Child Care Group Homes?**

The ratios for Centers are:

- Infants – 1:5 or 2:11
- One year old children – 1:6 or 2:13
- Two year old children – 1:8
- Three year old children – 1:13
- Four year old children – 1:15
- Five year old children – 1:20
- School-age children – 1:20

The Number of staff for Child Care Group Homes, regardless of age is: 1:5
2:6-10

11. **What do I look for in a good Center or Home?**

Click on a *Parent's Child Care Checklist* to receive a questionnaire you may print out to take with you to a Center or Home in order to help you make a decision about that facility.

12. **Can you recommend a good Child Care Facility?**

OCCL does not rate a facility. OCCL maintains a Public File with a three-year history on each facility. These files are available for the public to review. Each file has inspection reports, complaint information, deficiencies and documentation of corrections as well as the full licensing history, staff lists, and applicant information. OCCL has a list of each facility in your zip code, by city or by county. You may request a copy of the list that would help you, or find the list located on the WEB at www.azdhs.gov

13. **Can infants be mixed with older children?**

In a Child Care Center infants may be mixed with older children if those older children are younger than school age and there are less than 6 children present in the child care center. Infants may never be mixed with school age children. When there are 6 or more children present at the center, infants may not be mixed with any other age group. In a Certified Child Care Group Home all ages, including infants, may be mixed.

14. **How do I find out about complaints made against a facility?**

When you tour the facility, ask to see copies of current inspection reports.

OCCL keeps a record of all complaints logged against a facility. To find out about the complaints, you may call your regional office. (see # 22 for office addresses and phone numbers)

You may visit the Office of Child Care Licensing to read the details of complaint investigations as well as any deficiencies that were cited during the investigation.

15. **How do I find out about any enforcement actions against the facility?**

Just click on www.azdhs.gov

16. **How do I file a complaint? Who do I call if OCCL cannot take my complaint?**

OCCL investigates all complaints that are based on rule or statute violations within their jurisdiction. To file a complaint, call OCCL between the hours of 8AM and 5PM Monday-Friday and speak to a licensing surveyor.

Complaints may also be submitted in writing, e.g., E-Mail.

If you have a complaint against a facility, but it is not a rule violation, there may be another agency who can take the complaint and investigate the information. If you don't know who to call, our staff will try to direct you to the appropriate agency.

17. **How often are facilities inspected?**

Centers are inspected at least annually.

Group Homes are inspected at least twice annually.

All complaints within the jurisdiction of OCCL are investigated.

18. **Can a facility dis-enroll my child for any reason?**

Yes, refer to the center's Statement of Services for information regarding their disenrollment policies and procedures.

19. **When can a sick child return to school?**

When they are free from signs and symptoms of illness.

20. **Can you give me the Tax ID #?**

No, you will need to get the Tax ID# from the facility your child attends.

21. **Why don't health clubs, etc. have to be licensed?**

Health clubs that offer child care services are exempt if the parents remain at the facility (on premises) while the child is in care.

22. **How and where can I view inspection reports?**

You may view the inspection reports at the facility. It is required by statute that current inspection reports are available upon request.

You may also review inspection reports at your local Child Care Licensing office.

Phoenix:

150 North 18th Avenue

Suite 400

(602) 364-2539

Tucson:

400 W. Congress

Suite 100

(520) 628-6540

Flagstaff:

1500 E. Cedar

Suite 22

(928) 774-2707

Parent's Rights

We recognize that you, as a parent, play the most important role in your child's growth and development. Parents should be closely involved in their child's care. Because you chose licensed care for your child, YOU:

1. have the right to expect that the care that your child receives meets minimum standards as outlined in the child care regulations;
2. have the right to visit any time your child is in care without making an appointment;
3. have the right to see the rooms and outside play area where the child care is provided during operating hours;
4. can view the public file of any child care facility at a regional OCCL;
5. can request to view inspections at the facility;
6. have the right to a written statement of services from your child care center, to include information concerning fees;
7. must give written permission before a provider may take your child swimming or on field trips;
8. have the right to be notified immediately of any serious injury or accident requiring medical attention;
9. can expect that any complaint that you make regarding a violation of a regulation or the care your child is receiving will be investigated by OCCL;
10. have the right to be made aware of your child's daily activity and progress.

By Providers

1. What do I need to do to get Licensed/Certified and how long does it take?

Request an Application Packet from the Child Care Office nearest you.

Attend a Department Training/Orientation.

The length of time an owner has to complete the process is 180 days.

2. How many children can I care for without being Licensed/Certified?

Four for compensation. Compensation means money or other consideration, including goods, services, vouchers, time, or other benefit, that is received by a licensee from any source as payment for child care services or that is paid to a staff member by a licensee.

3. Who do I call for training?

OCCL – see # 11 for your area

Department of Economic Security (DES); Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R);

Department of Education (DOE); Colleges, and Universities

In Tucson, Child and Family Resources

4. How do I get funding?

The Health Department does not fund childcare, however you can check other resources for aid in funding such as the Department of Economic Security, the Child Care Food Program through the Department of Education, and Child Care Resource & Referral. These agencies may be able to refer you to available grants.

5. How do I get fingerprinted?

OCCL can send you the Criminal History Affidavit and Fingerprint instructions. Call DPS for the Fingerprint Application Packets at (602) 223-2279. We do not provide a list of individuals or agencies who offer fingerprinting services. The local Police Dept. can either do the fingerprinting or refer you.

- 6. What other agencies do I need to contact?**
See the Helpful Telephone List at www.azdhs.gov
- 7. How often do I need to get a T.B. test for OCCL requirements?**
The Department required documentation upon employment that shows a negative reading for a Mantoux TB test within a year prior to employment, or a negative reading on a TB test given within 12 hours of employment. A negative chest X-ray or a statement written by a physician that you are free from T.B. symptoms is acceptable if you have had positive readings in the past.
- 8. What are the qualifications for a director/provider?**
Qualifications for a director are found under R9-5-401.
Qualifications for a provider are found under R9-3-302.
- 9. Can you help me set fees and refer children to me?**
No, we are not able to make such suggestions. DES and CCR&R do track statistics on fees throughout Arizona.
- 10. When will my renewal inspection be done (my license/certificate expires this month)?**
Contact your licensing surveyor to ensure your application was received. Your inspection will be conducted as soon as possible. You will not be penalized by OCCL for any delay in inspection if you have submitted the correct paperwork within the given time limits. Your license/certificate is valid until the Department issues a new license/certificate or takes legal action against it.
- 11. How do I order the children's Emergency Information, and Immunization Record Cards (blue cards)?**
For a master copy of the Children's Emergency Information and Immunization Record Card in English or Spanish call: Phoenix - (602) 364-2539
Outside Phoenix - 1-800-615-8555
Tucson - (520) 628-6540
Flagstaff - (928) 774-2707
You may also print a copy from the Division's web page at <http://www.azdhs.gov>
- 12. How many workshop hours does one college credit equal?**
One college credit hour equals sixteen workshop hours.